

# THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



**TONI ATKINS**  
COUNCILMEMBER  
THIRD DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Councilmember Atkins Inzunza Call on City to Issue Medicinal Marijuana Identification Cards**

**San Diego** - City Councilmembers Toni Atkins and Ralph Inzunza yesterday called on the City Council to direct the City Manager, City Attorney and Police Department to work with the City's Medicinal Marijuana Task Force to develop policies and procedures to promptly implement a Medicinal Marijuana Patient Identification Card system in the City of San Diego. The announcement, made by Atkins and Inzunza at a news conference just prior to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services (PS&NS) Committee meeting chaired by Atkins, was ratified shortly thereafter during the meeting on a motion by Inzunza.

Atkins stated she and Inzunza were moving forward on what is essentially a County health issue because of the County's failure to address the issue. "Proposition 215 encourages local health agencies to establish guidelines for patients, doctors and law enforcement. The County, as the regional public health agency, has failed to provide these guidelines," said Atkins.

"In an effort to better serve the citizens of our City who continue to suffer from serious illnesses such as cancer, AIDS and glaucoma, and to fill the void created by the County's reluctance to tackle the issue, the City has been forced to take action," Atkins stated.

The Councilmembers stated that they view an identification card system-successfully established last year in San Francisco-as a sensible way to provide guidelines and assistance to City law enforcement officers while upholding the rights of terminally or seriously ill patients who desire access to medicinal marijuana under the State law passed pursuant to Proposition 215. "This will allow qualified patients with recommendations from their doctors to apply for the card with the City," said Inzunza. "It will reduce the fear patients have in being prosecuted, avoid needless and costly prosecution, and assist law enforcement officers in identifying qualified patients."

"The Committee has effectively given the green light and backing to the Task Force to get to work and bring us a program we can approve. As part of that program it will be determined where within the City the program would be administered," said Atkins.

Councilmembers Donna Frye and George Stevens joined with Atkins and Inzunza in supporting Inzunza's motion to create the identification card system. Councilmember Brian Maienschein cast the

lone dissenting vote. The Task Force will now develop recommendations for the identification card system and report back to the PS&NS Committee, before it ultimately is considered by the full council.

"I'm not prepared to stay on the sidelines and do nothing, while in the meantime, to quote Ellen Goodman of the Boston Globe, 'patients are using drug dealers as doctors and treatment for suffering is a crime,'" said Atkins. "I call upon my Council colleagues to act with swift compassion. We need to create an environment in our City where terminally and seriously ill patients don't suffer physically because they are afraid of the law-especially when 60 percent of Californians have voted to give these patients the relief they so dearly require."

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